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JMCCARTER, VOA NEWS CA, NEA/PPD:CBOURGEOIS, AZAIBACK, AND  
AFERNANDEZ, IIP/G/NEA-SA MDAVIDSON  
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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: Mousa, Iraq, Lebanon, Palestinian Territories (2/13)

11. Summary: Syrian papers on Feb. 13 reported President Asad's meeting with Arab League Secretary General Amr Mousa on Feb. 12. Talks focused on Arab developments, particularly in Iraq, the Palestinian territories, and Lebanon. The President stressed that national accord is the only way to achieve stability and national unity free from foreign interference. He reiterated Syria's support for any sincere effort leading to the realization of this objective.

President Asad stressed the importance of activating Arab solidarity and creating an effective Arab position against current challenges that the entire Arab nation is facing. Mousa and FM Mouallem held a press conference in which they avoided going into the details of suggested solutions for the Lebanese crisis. Mousa said that he hopes to resolve the complications one by one," adding that "everybody is working to solve the problem in Lebanon." For his part, Mouallem said: "Syria wants stability and security to prevail in Lebanon," adding that the solution "must be Lebanese; Syria will support what the Lebanese decide."

On the issue of Iraqi refugees, papers reported that Sweden urged the EU to support Syria, Jordan and Iran, who have received hundreds of thousands of Iraqi refugees since the US-led invasion on Iraq in 12003.

End of summary.

12. Selected Headlines:

"President Asad reiterated the importance of activating Arab solidarity and national accord without foreign intervention. AL Secretary General Mousa: The meeting with President Asad was very

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important... FM Mouallem: The solution is emerging from Lebanon" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 2/13)

"Foreign Minister Mouallem: We hope to find a solution to the Lebanese crisis soon.... We are exerting efforts to make Iraqi reconciliation a success. Mousa: The Lebanese crisis is complicated and needs much consultation" (Government-owned Al-Ba'th, 2/13)

"Russia: The international tribunal must be under the roof of the Lebanese constitution" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 2/13)

"Confrontations in Jerusalem. Hanieh is to form the national government today. The EU promises to study the Mecca Accord openly. Israel suspends excavation under the al-Aqsa Mosque" (Government-owned Tishreen, 2/13)

"Israeli PM Olmert: The whole world knows we must withdraw from occupied Golan" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 2/13)

"The US Congress debates objection to dispatch of US forces to Iraq. Sweden urges support for Syria, which has received Iraqi refugees" (Government-owned Al-Thawra, 2/13)

"As a first challenge to the new security plan, over 100 Iraqis killed in explosions in Baghdad" (Government-owned Tisheen, 2/13)

### 13. Editorial Block Quotes:

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"Until the Opposite Is Proved"

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Izz-al-Din al-Darwish, an editorialist in government-owned Tishrin, wrote (2/13): "It was not surprising for the international Quartet, which is completely under Israeli and US influence, to adopt the Israeli position toward the Mecca agreement between Fatah and HAMAS, by calling on the upcoming Palestinian government to renounce violence and recognize Israel as a condition for dealing with it."

"The Quartet did not ask the Israeli government to do anything in return.... Why doesn't Israel recognize the Palestinian government, or international law itself...? No country in the world takes international law and UN resolutions as lightly as Israel. "The international Quartet is supposed to demand, first, that Israel recognize national Palestinian rights, stop committing crimes against Palestinians, and accept Security Council resolutions as the basis of the solution. When Israel does all this, there will be no Palestinian resistance or reactions, and the situation will definitely stabilize. It will then be said that the Quartet represented international legitimacy and indeed played its role. But as it stands now, the Quartet, very regrettably, represents the Israeli will only. We will continue to say this until the opposite has been proved."

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"A Call for an Active Move"

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Muhammad Khayr al-Jammali, a commentator in government-owned Al-Thawrah, wrote (2/13): "Verbal Arab and Islamic condemnations of Israel's excavations around Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem will not deter Israel or prevent it from Judaizing Arab lands and obliterating their Arab and Islamic character...."

"The new Israeli crime must be confronted by a new policy and a move of a new kind on the part of Arabs, Muslims, and the Palestinian people: A new Intifadah that makes Israel understand that the al-Aqsa Mosque, Jerusalem, and all the occupied territories constitute a red line that settlements and Judaization plans cannot cross, and effective Arab and Islamic action that begins with severing all forms of relations with Israel by the Arab countries that have relations with it. Arab and Islamic activity must also include work inside the United Nations to get the international organization to impose its laws and resolutions on Israel, which has repeatedly violated these laws and resolutions in the occupied territories...."

"If Israel insists on disrespecting principles of international law, Arab and Islamic activity must focus on the implementation of Chapter Seven of the UN Charter to maintain the Arab and Islamic identity of the occupied territories and their holy places and to protect world peace and security from the serious threat they are facing as a result of the Israeli occupation and its settlement and Judaization activities."

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"Unconvincing Coincidences"  
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Ali Nasrallah, an editorialist in government-owned Al-Thawra, commented (2/13): "Israeli Minister Binyamin Ben Eliezer spoke of the need for Israel to be prepared for a new war on Lebanon. Meanwhile, Israeli Minister Avi Dichter admitted that Israel carried out four or five operations inside the Blue Line similar to those which were carried out on Thursday night near the Marun al-Ras town.

It is not a coincidence for these two statements to be made at the same time.

"Also, it may be unreasonable to say that the confiscation of a truckload of weapons of the [Lebanese] national resistance was a sheer coincidence that cannot be linked to developments on the other side of the Palestinian-Lebanese border....

"Surely, any justification by the [Lebanese] authority to cover up the landing of a plane coming from Ben-Gurion Airport at Beirut International Airport will not be convincing. Also, there can be no justification for the docking of a ship that deals with Israel at the port of Beirut without official approval by the team in authority....

"Things in Lebanon have been clear for some time now. One team believes in the need to resist occupation, protect sovereignty and independence, and preserve national unity, domestic peace, and coexistence, while another team operates in line with plans drawn up in Washington and Tel Aviv for Lebanon and the region....

"It is naive to say that Israeli violations against the Blue Line in South Lebanon that are met only with an expression of concern, and the shamelessly announced positions in Beirut in support of the enemy's plots that are coupled with unconstitutional practices on the ground, are sheer coincidences. Also, it is naive to say that they are not part of moves to continue the July war and an attempt to achieve what that war failed to achieve."

Corbin